



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 17 March 2008

Current Nationwide



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- According to the KAKE 10 Wichita, a series of explosions at a chemical plant in Sterling, Kansas, woke up residents there Friday morning. Residents in the area say they heard explosions between five to eight minutes at the Jacam Chemicals plant in the southern part of the town. Sterling Police are confirming they received a call to the plant shortly after 5 a.m., but are not saying it was explosion at this time. (See item [3](#))
- Agence France-Presse reports U.S. officials said Thursday that “real and growing” threats to U.S. computer and telecommunications networks were behind the holding of Cyber Storm II, the largest-ever cyber-security exercises, this week. Computer security experts from five countries, more than 40 private sector companies, and numerous government and state agencies are spending a week fielding simulated “real-world,” on-line attacks on the computer systems of government bodies, corporations, transportation and other key industries. (See item [27](#))

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: **Physical**: ELEVATED, **Cyber**: ELEVATED

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *March 13, KMSP 9 Minneapolis-St. Paul* – (Minnesota) **MN Dept. of Public Safety** warns to keep gas meters clear of ice. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety is

reminding homeowners, residents, and business operators to watch for ice accumulations on or near their gas meters and service regulators. Ice build up can prevent these from working properly. Malfunctions are most likely to occur during freeze/thaw cycles. When snow melts and re-freezes, it can form solid ice that seals off the vent on a gas regulator. With the vent sealed, the regulator will not work properly, and one of two things can happen: “Gas pressure can build up inside the building, resulting in a fire or explosion, or lack of gas flow will result in loss of heat service. Either situation is dangerous and easily avoided,” a safety engineer says. Outside meter and service regulators should be kept constantly clear of dripping water and snow accumulations. Snow removed from driveways and sidewalks should not be placed near a meter, service regulator, or any gas facility. “If your meter does become covered with ice, don’t try to remove it yourself,” she advises. “Call your gas company.” She reminds consumers to stay alert. “If you smell gas, lose service, or your gas appliances malfunction, leave your home, and call your natural gas supplier from a neighbor’s house.”

Source:

<http://www.myfoxtwincities.com/myfox/pages/News/Detail?contentId=6021624&version=1&locale=EN-US&layoutCode=TSTY&pageId=3.2.1>

2. *March 13, Canwest News Service* – (International) **Canadian pleads guilty in plot to blow up pipeline.** A Vancouver-area man pleaded guilty in a New Mexico courtroom Thursday to plotting to blow up the Trans-Alaskan oil pipeline in 2000. The man pleaded guilty to aiding and abetting terrorism transcending national boundaries. He was arrested in August 1999. Officials said the man – and an American accomplice who later turned against him – allegedly schemed to buy oil and gas futures and profit from an energy shortage that they hoped would be triggered by the bombing. Prosecutors said the man planned to blow up the pipeline on New Year’s Eve, 1999, by placing 14 bombs at points along the nearly 1,290-kilometer pipeline which runs from the Arctic Ocean south to the Gulf of Alaska at Valdez. The arrest was the result of a joint investigation by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Source: <http://www.nationalpost.com/news/story.html?id=373327>

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Chemical Industry Sector

3. *March 14, KAKE 10 Wichita* – (Kansas) **Sterling chemical plant explodes.** A series of explosions at a chemical plant in Sterling, Kansas, woke up residents there Friday morning. Residents in the area say they heard explosions between five to eight minutes at the Jacam Chemicals plant in the southern part of the town. Sterling Police are confirming they received a call to the plant shortly after 5 a.m., but are not saying it was explosion at this time. They can confirm it has since been brought under control. They also say there is no mandatory evacuation in place. So far, there have been no reports of anyone being hurt. Fires are not a one-time occurrence for the Jacam Chemicals company. In February 2002, the downtown offices and laboratory were also the site of a fire that eventually burned the facility down. It also prompted the evacuation of between

100 to 200 residents. Jacam manufactures chemicals for car washes, water softeners and oil refineries.

Source: <http://www.kake.com/news/headlines/16673226.html>

4. *March 13, Wichita Eagle* – (Kansas) **Bill would require inspections of chemical storage plants.** The Kansas State fire marshal could start inspecting above-ground chemical storage facilities every three years as part of an effort to prevent another massive explosion like the one at the Barton Solvents plant in Valley Center last July. The Senate Natural Resources Committee heard testimony Thursday on Senate Bill 676, which would require the fire marshal to inspect all existing facilities by July 1, 2009, then once every three years after that. A Deputy State Fire Marshal estimated 25 to 30 sites statewide would fall under the proposed law. In January, representatives from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the fire marshal told the committee that neither had ever inspected the Barton tanks.

Source: <http://www.kansas.com/news/updates/story/340395.html>

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Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector

5. *March 14, Deseret Morning News* – (National) **Bill would bar nuclear waste imports.** A bill introduced Thursday in Congress seeks to prohibit the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) from authorizing any company in the U.S. to accept foreign-generated nuclear waste. An exception would be U.S. military waste generated abroad. The bill's inspiration came from the pending EnergySolutions application to accept waste from decommissioned nuclear reactors in Italy. A U.S. House representative said it would be too speculative to guess whether the bill could be passed in time to impact the EnergySolutions proposal.

Source: <http://deseretnews.com/article/1,5143,695261441,00.html>

6. *March 13, Associated Press* – (National) **DOE idea: Going private with nuke waste.** Department of Energy (DOE) officials trying to promote nuclear power are suggesting that private industry assume some responsibility for the country's nuclear waste. The head of DOE's Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management said that the idea could ensure more stable management and financial support for the long-delayed Yucca Mountain nuclear waste dump project in Nevada that he manages. He suggested a public-private partnership modeled on the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), the nation's largest public power company. The TVA was created by Congress and has a board of directors appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate, but raises its own money and manages its own employees. The idea of a public-private partnership to manage Yucca Mountain and other elements of spent fuel disposal has support from the nuclear industry and is garnering some interest on Capitol Hill. But the change would require legislation that also would have to deal with the liability to utilities and dedicating money from a special nuclear waste fund paid into by utilities. No one thinks that could come about anytime soon.

Source:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080314/ap_on_go_ca_st_pe/nuclear_waste;_ylt=AqDUfE

7. *March 13, Bloomberg* – (International) **Samurai-sword maker's reactor monopoly may cool nuclear revival.** Japan Steel Works Ltd. is the only plant in the world capable of producing the central part of a nuclear reactor's containment vessel in a single piece, reducing the risk of a radiation leak. Utilities that will not need the equipment for years are making \$100 million down payments now on components Japan Steel makes from 600-ton ingots. Each year the Tokyo-based company can turn out just four of the steel forgings that contain the radioactivity in a nuclear reactor. Even after it doubles capacity in the next two years, there will not be enough production to meet building plans. As many as 237 reactors may be built globally by 2030, according to the World Nuclear Association. Japan Steel caters to all nuclear reactor makers except in Russia, which makes its own heavy forgings. It would take any competitor more than five years to catch up with Japan Steel's technology, said the company's chief executive officer. Rivals are working to break the Japan Steel stranglehold, including South Korea's Doosan Heavy Industries & Construction Co. and Japan Casting & Forging Corp. Areva is considering modifying its newest design to be able to make the central reactor-vessel part from a 350-ton ingot instead of more than 500 tons as required today, said an Areva plant manager. Another alternative is to turn back the technological clock and weld together two smaller forgings, said the chief executive officer of McDermott International Inc.'s Babcock & Wilcox Co. That technique was used over the past 40 years in the U.S. and France and is still applied in China.

Source:

[http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601109&sid=aaVMzCTMz3ms&refer=h
ome](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601109&sid=aaVMzCTMz3ms&refer=home)

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

8. *March 14, Strategy Page* – (National) **New and somewhat improved.** The U.S. Air Force has completed upgrading the guidance systems of its 450 LGM-30 Minuteman III Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs). The new guidance system, the NS50, has about the same performance as the one it replaced, but is more reliable and easier to maintain. The upgraded Minuteman III is expected to remain in service until 2020, at which point it will be replaced by a new missile design.

Source: <http://www.strategypage.com/htmw/hticbm/articles/20080314.aspx>

9. *March 13, United Press International* – (National) **TSO completes Navy training task order.** Tactical Solution Partners' Tactical Solution Options (TSO) division completed a maritime security operations evaluator training task order for the U.S. Navy's Strike Force Training Atlantic. Company officials say over the two year contract, Tactical's TSO division has trained and evaluated over 30 U.S. Navy combatant warships in an effort to enhance the Atlantic fleet's Maritime Interception Operations mission to combat terrorism and the flow of contraband and dangerous materials among other initiatives.

Source:

http://www.upi.com/International_Security/Industry/Briefing/2008/03/13/tso_completes_navy_training_task_order/7504/

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Banking and Finance Sector

10. *March 13, KRQE 13Albuquerque* – (National) **Identity thief rakes rapid refund with fake form.** A woman reported that when she went to file her tax return, she discovered an identity thief had gotten there first and made off with her refund. And according to the Internal Revenue Service, what happened to her is all too common. In her case the imposter used a W-2 wage statement with all her information to file a tax return through a commercial tax service, requested a refund-anticipation loan from the service and walked away with the money. She had no idea someone was posing as her until she filed her taxes. She believes Jackson Hewitt Tax Service, a nationwide chain of tax preparers, knowingly filed a return that was questionable. When the woman contacted the IRS, she was told she needs to re-file everything through the mail. Once the agency confirms her identity, she will get her refund although that could take months.

Source: <http://www.krqe.com/global/story.asp?s=8008813>

11. *March 13, CNN* – (National) **New \$5 bill makes debut.** The U.S. Treasury Department on Thursday began circulating a redesigned \$5 bill. The first transaction was at a gift shop near President Lincoln's summer cottage overlooking Washington. The \$5 note has Abraham Lincoln's image on the front as usual, plus security features to discourage counterfeiting added to the paper help people to spot bogus bills.

Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2008/US/03/13/new.bill/index.html>

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Transportation Sector

12. *March 14, Associated Press* – (National) **TSA to train bomb-sniffing dogs for airplane cargo.** Starting Monday, two federal inspectors stationed at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport will begin training with bomb-sniffing dogs as part of a nationwide effort to increase cargo screening on passenger planes. The federal agency is spending \$22.4 million during the next two years to train 170 new bomb-sniffing dogs - 85 of them handled by TSA inspectors and 85 by local police - and deploy them at U.S. airports. The Transportation Security Administration program aims to meet a requirement set by Congress in July that all cargo on passenger aircraft be screened for explosives by 2010, said a spokesman for the federal agency. In addition to passengers and their luggage, airlines routinely ship air cargo in airplanes. The first TSA dog teams - a dozen dogs and handlers destined for major airports in Miami, Los Angeles, New York and Washington - were expected to graduate Friday from a 10-week training course at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, the official said.

Source: <http://www.macon.com/198/story/294294.html>

13. *March 14, USA Today* – (National) **Anti-terror rules for trains rapped.** New anti-

terrorism rules aimed at stopping companies from sending railway cars packed with toxic chemicals through cities may still leave large populations vulnerable, according to members of Congress and security experts. The rules require rail companies to assess whether it would be safer to send cargo trains carrying chemicals to alternate routes around the nation's 60 largest cities. Critics say that rail companies will not reroute the trains because it would be too expensive. A national expert on the threat posed by rail cars filled with chemicals such as chlorine and ammonia said a rail car packed with chemicals could provide an inviting target to a terrorist. The Homeland Security Secretary said this month that his department has tightened rail security in other ways. He said voluntary agreements with rail companies have reduced the "dwell time" of unattended cars carrying dangerous chemicals. The dwell time refers to how long a rail shipment awaits pickup by a customer in a rail yard. Officials at the TSA and at the Association of American Railroads say the dwell time has been reduced by 40 percent over the past year.

Source: http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-03-13-toxictrains_N.htm

14. *March 13, Associated Press* – (International) **EU, U.S. to start new travel security talks.** European Union and U.S. security chiefs on Thursday said they had agreed to pursue negotiations on a disputed U.S. visa waiver program that would allow Washington to keep talking to countries individually on some issues while dealing with Brussels on others. The U.S. wants air marshals on flights and electronic travel authorization as part of a new visa waiver law that could also require EU nations to provide more data on passengers on trans-Atlantic flights – demands that have irked EU officials. Washington also has been making bilateral deals with some EU nations – over the objections of EU officials who want to negotiate a visa waiver deal for the entire 27-nation bloc – which has caused tensions across the Atlantic and within Europe. On Wednesday, the Secretary of Homeland Security signed bilateral agreements with Latvia and Estonia, and he is expected to sign deals soon with Hungary, Lithuania and Slovakia.

Source: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/23612607/>

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Postal and Shipping Sector

Nothing to Report

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Agriculture and Food Sector

15. *March 13, Reuters* – (National) **Risky cattle use needs tough penalty –U.S. lawmakers.** A bipartisan team of senators introduced legislation on Thursday to impose tougher penalties, including the permanent closure, for companies that process disabled cattle at risk of carrying food-borne diseases. The legislation would impose fines for first-time offenders who slaughter livestock too ill or injured to walk, known in the trade as "downer" cattle. A second violation would bring a one-year suspension in operations.

Senators also proposed in the bill requiring U.S. Department of Agriculture to release the names of stores that receive products later recalled. USDA says it will begin listing retailers later this year, but lawmakers and consumer groups are pushing USDA to do it sooner. The call for tougher fines and penalties for plants comes nearly a month after Hallmark/Westland Meat Co recalled 143 million pounds of meat, mostly beef, dating back to February 2006.

Source: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/feedarticle?id=7382958>

16. *March 12, Reuters* – (National) **U.S. organic food industry fears GMO contamination.** Widespread contamination of U.S. corn, soybeans, and other crops by genetically engineered varieties is threatening the purity of organic and natural food products and driving purveyors of such specialty products to new efforts to protect their markets, industry leaders said this week. A range of players, from dairy farmers to natural food retailers, are behind an effort to introduce testing requirements and standards for certification aimed at keeping contamination at bay. That goal is rapidly becoming harder, however, as planting of biotech corn, soybeans, and other crops expands across the U.S. Proponents of the plan are rolling it out this week at an industry meeting in Anaheim, California, seeking to get the entire organic and natural foods industry to agree on testing and standard certifications. Companies that get certified will be allowed to use a seal designating as much on their products. Mixing of biotech crops and conventional crops can occur during many phases of harvest, storage, and shipment of grain, and drifting pollen and other natural forces can also contaminate crops while they are still in the fields. Contamination of conventional crops by biotech crops has been reported around the world. There were 39 cases of crop contamination in 23 countries in 2007, and more than 200 in 57 countries over the last 10 years, according to biotech critic Greenpeace International.

Source:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20080312/us_nm/biotech_crops_contamination_dc_1

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Water Sector

17. *March 13, Associated Press* – (Idaho) **Idaho City testing water after system failure.** Idaho City's water problems continue, and officials are testing the water for possible contamination this week. Residents were told on Tuesday to begin boiling their water before drinking or cooking with it. Tuesday's boil order was issued after a malfunction in the controls caused a system failure overnight. The city's water system has had problems since last month, when city leaders noticed the city's water tank was not refilling because of a suspected leak somewhere in the system. Last week schools were shut down after the water tank went nearly dry.
- Source: <http://www.montanastation.com/global/story.asp?s=8011591>
18. *March 13, Associated Press* – (Arizona) **Phoenix to begin testing drinking water.** The city of Phoenix will begin testing its drinking water supply for trace amounts of pharmaceuticals in the wake of an investigation by the Associated Press that found contamination in many of the nation's major cities. City officials originally said they

would wait for the federal Environmental Protection Agency to develop standards for testing for prescription and over-the-counter drugs in water supplies. But the mayor told the Arizona Republic in a story posted on the paper's Web site Thursday that the city will go ahead immediately. The monthslong AP investigation found that a vast array of pharmaceuticals, including antibiotics, anti-convulsants, mood stabilizers, and sex hormones, have been found in the drinking water supplies of at least 41 million Americans. Phoenix is participating in two studies looking into the dangers, one through the WaterReuse Foundation and the other through the American Water Works Association.

Source: <http://www.mohavedailynews.com/articles/2008/03/14/news/state/state2.txt>

19. *March 13, Visalia Times-Delta* – (California) **Visalia's water to be tested for chemical.** A state project starts today to test Visalia groundwater for a cleaning solvent that experts say is potentially cancer-causing. The substance, perchloroethylene, known as PCE or "perc," is used in dry cleaning and as a degreaser in auto shops. State officials and the district manager for California Water Service, which provides Visalia's water from 74 wells throughout the city, say Visalia's water is safe. The manager said the company conducts weekly tests of its water. Wells are tested less frequently, he said. Any time tests show a contaminant in a well greater than permitted by state regulations, the well is either equipped with a filter or taken out of service. For PCE, the maximum allowable level is five parts per billion. In past years, some Visalia wells have been shut down because of high PCE levels. The state agency directing the project, the Department of Toxic Substances Control, said CalWater tests in 2005 found PCE in amounts below the maximum permitted by the state Department of Health in 14 wells. In seven wells, the contaminant exceeded the maximum. The state's goal, said the project manager, is to find the sources of PCE in groundwater and the parties responsible.

Source:

<http://www.visaliatimesdelta.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080313/NEWS01/803130323/1002/NEWS01>

20. *March 13, Muskegon Chronicle* – (Michigan) **Laketon Township to begin 18-month sewer and water lines project.** A major infrastructure project that was originally proposed and designed 30 years ago is on the verge of becoming a reality. Construction on the multimillion dollar extensions of sewer and water lines are set to begin this summer. The water line project was spurred by the need to provide city water to residences in an area contaminated by oil wells in the 1980s, while the sewer line project, which has sparked some opposition, was added by township officials under the guidelines of serving the public health. Township officials say they expect state Department of Environmental Quality approval for all necessary permits this month and the contract for the work to be awarded in May. The township contracted with the county to oversee the bidding and awarding of the contract to put in the water and sewer lines simultaneously, which will save money and limit replacement of the road to one time. Township officials cited the Michigan Public Health Code in making the decision to extend the sewer line.

Source: http://blog.mlive.com/chronicle/2008/03/laketon_township_a_major.html

21. *March 13, Honolulu Advertiser* – (Hawaii) **City presses feds to ease demands on waste plants.** A federal mandate to upgrade Honolulu’s largest wastewater treatment plants could cost the city hundreds of millions of dollars and is unwarranted, city officials told residents last night at an informational session. Federal officials at the hearing last night, however, said they are bound by the Clean Water Act to ensure municipalities around the country comply with rules regulating wastewater management. The city estimates the cost of plant upgrades at \$1.2 billion and that the work could take a decade or more. The city already is under pressure to make other sewer repairs and upgrades costing hundreds of millions of dollars.
Source: <http://www.honoluluadvertiser.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080313/NEWS01/803130348/1001/NEWS01>

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Public Health and Healthcare Sector

22. *March 14, Xinhua* – (International) **HK reports 50 new cases of flu-like illness.** The Center for Health Protection of the Department of Health of Hong Kong said Thursday that it had followed up on 50 new reports of influenza-like illness outbreaks affecting 305 people. Most of these reports were verified after the cut-off time Wednesday, said the Center, noting that influenza-like illness maybe caused by influenza or other respiratory viruses. The reported outbreaks comprise 27 primary schools and 16 kindergartens and childcare centers, five secondary schools, one correctional institution, and one special school. An expert group convened the first meeting Thursday afternoon to thoroughly investigate the three recent fatal cases involving children amid the recent seasonal influenza peak.
Source: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-03/14/content_7786275.htm
23. *March 13, Reuters* – (International) **Cat carried woman’s antibiotic-resistant infection.** Pets can harbor virulent antibiotic-resistant infections and spread them to humans, German researchers reported on Wednesday. The warning is based on the case of a woman who had deep abscesses caused by methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). Her husband and two children showed evidence of infection, too, but it disappeared with treatment even as the woman’s abscesses festered. When a doctor from the Bavarian Food and Health Safety Authority and colleagues examined the woman’s three apparently healthy cats, one turned out to have the same strain. Only after the cat was treated with antibiotics did the woman’s abscesses clear up.
Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUSCOL35887820080313>
24. *March 13, CanWest News Service* – (International) **Bumper crop of mumps going cross-country, warns health agency.** Canada is experiencing a dramatic increase in mumps, largely due to a higher number of “susceptibles,” people who are choosing not to get vaccinated or people who are missing their booster shot against the virus, according to the Public Health Agency. In 2006 there were a total of 17 cases of mumps in Canada. There have already been about 130 cases this year, following on 1,284 cases

of mumps in 2007, he said. “This is considered a large outbreak. Because of the vaccination programs we don’t see too many cases of mumps and so this is higher than what is expected,” an agency spokesman said. This recent outbreak began last year on the East Coast and has been tracked as it made its way across Canada with the most recent cases occurring in the Fraser Valley of British Columbia, the International Society for Infectious Diseases reported this week.

Source: <http://www.nationalpost.com/news/canada/story.html?id=373238>

Government Facilities Sector

Nothing to Report

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Emergency Services Sector

25. *March 13, WWAY 3 Wilmington* – (North Carolina) **Brunswick County emergency services goes extra mile for safety.** Brunswick County emergency services have gone the extra mile to keep their residents safe. Two years ago they purchased the FirstCall interactive network. This system takes the phone numbers of all the residents in Brunswick County and puts them in a database. During dangerous situations, it can call the numbers and notify them of the situation. During an event like a fire, a chemical spill, severe weather, or a missing person, Brunswick County emergency services have the option of activating the FirstCall interactive network. It is essentially a reverse 911 system that has the ability to call anyone being affected by the situation.

Source:

http://www.wwaytv3.com/brunswick_county_emergency_services_goes_extra_mile_for_safety/03/2008

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Information Technology

26. *March 13, Associated Press* – (National) **Electronic gadgets latest sources of computer viruses.** Many of today’s new technologies have unwanted extras from the factory: pre-installed viruses that steal passwords, open doors for hackers, and make computers spew spam. Recent cases reviewed by the Associated Press include some of the most widely used tech devices: Apple iPods, digital picture frames sold by Target and Best Buy stores, and TomTom navigation gear. In most cases, Chinese factories – where many companies have turned to keep prices low – are the source. So far, the virus problem appears to come from lax quality control, perhaps a careless worker plugging an infected music player into a factory computer used for testing, rather than organized sabotage by hackers or the Chinese factories. It is the digital equivalent of the recent series of tainted products traced to China, including toxic toothpaste, poisonous pet food, and toy trains coated in lead paint. But sloppiness is the simplest explanation, not

the only one. If a virus is introduced at an earlier stage of production, by a corrupt employee or a hacker when software is uploaded to the gadget, then the problems could be far more serious and widespread. Knowing how many devices have been sold, or tracking viruses with any precision, is impossible because of the secrecy of electronics makers and the companies they hire to make their products. But given the nature of mass manufacturing, the numbers could be huge.

Source:

<http://www.cnn.com/2008/TECH/ptech/03/13/factory.installed.virus.ap/index.html>

27. *March 13, Agence France-Presse* – (National) **US holds largest ever simulated cyber-attack exercise.** U.S. officials said Thursday that “real and growing” threats to US computer and telecommunications networks were behind the holding of Cyber Storm II, the largest-ever cyber-security exercises, this week. Computer security experts from five countries, more than 40 private sector companies, and numerous government and state agencies are spending a week fielding simulated “real-world,” on-line attacks on the computer systems of government bodies, corporations, transportation, and other key industries. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Under Secretary for the National Protection and Programs Directorate said the Cyber Storm II exercise sought to foster personal links between key officials in business and government. Those people, he said, are not always willing to share information about security issues involving the networks they run. Cyber Storm II tested the warning systems in place for attacks and sought to identify gaps in the way information was shared and reactions coordinated across various sectors. DHS officials declined to say what kinds of threats they found were most dangerous or what specific weaknesses were identified, citing security needs, but said a report on the exercise would be released later this year.

Source:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20080313/tc_afp/uscomputerinternetsecurity_080313232801;_ylt=Aq2VbO4qhZVic5Wjm8.igiDYa7gF

28. *March 13, USA Today* – (National) **Bush calls for tighter cybersecurity.** A sudden spike in the number of successful attacks against federal government information systems and databases has led President Bush to propose a multibillion-dollar response. The number of incidents reported to the Department of Homeland Security rose by 152 percent last year, to nearly 13,000, according to a new government report. The security breaches, more than 4,000 of which remain under investigation, ranged from the work of random hackers to organized crime and foreign governments, says the president of the Cyber Security Industry Alliance. The increase and severity of data breaches prompted Bush to recommend a 10 percent increase in cybersecurity funding for the coming fiscal year, to \$7.3 billion. That is a 73 percent increase since 2004. Much of heightened concern focuses on China, which could be infiltrating U.S. government information technology systems despite denials by Beijing. In its annual report to Congress last week on China’s military power, the Pentagon said several cyberspace attacks around the world in 2007 were sourced back to China.

Source:

http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2008-03-13-cybersecurity_N.htm?csp=34

Internet Alert Dashboard

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at soc@us-cert.gov or visit their Website: <http://www.us-cert.gov>.

Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

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Communications Sector

29. *March 13, EETimes.com* – (National) **iPhone ups ante for security software.** Apple's iPhone and Microsoft CE-based devices are upping the ante for security software in embedded systems, according to experts presenting at the Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association Wireless conference next month. Embedded security software has become essential to these open-system-based mobile devices, as they grapple with traditional security in addition to new concerns, such as providing a safe execution environment for third-party applications. Besides security software for embedded systems that must manage copy-protected content, Discretix, Safenet and others, such as Mocana Corp., are now being asked by mobile-device makers to supply safe operating environments in addition to all the bits and pieces necessary to secure that transactions can be safely handled by open-system mobile devices.

Source:

http://www.eetimes.com/rss/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=206903458&cid=RSSfeed_eetimes_newsRSS

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Commercial Facilities Sector

Nothing to Report

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National Monuments & Icons Sector

30. *March 14, Associated Press* – (North Dakota) **National Park Service officials say coal plant could hurt air.** Officials of the National Park Service say a coal-fired plant proposed in southwestern North Dakota could send too much haze over Theodore Roosevelt National Park. The proposed 500-megawatt Westmoreland Power plant would be built near Gascoyne. Interior officials wrote to the state Health Department last month, saying the plant could hurt visibility at the park. The state air quality director says the permit being considered for the plant would meet federal environmental standards. Park Service officials dispute the state's method for predicting smokestack emissions.

Source: <http://www.kxmc.com/News/218966.asp>

31. *March 14, Tennessean* – (Tennessee) **Dike built on wetlands spurs probe.** Federal agencies have stepped in to investigate the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency's (TWRA) construction of a gated dike near the Black Swamp in west Tennessee to try to improve duck hunting. A letter from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to the state wildlife agency says it violated the Clean Water Act by filling in land without a permit, which affects a wetland. TWRA has disagreed with the assessment. Since then, the case has been turned over to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Since it built the concrete structure last fall in the Hop-in Refuge, TWRA has maintained that no permit was needed. The December 20 letter from the Corps' Memphis office had demanded TWRA stop work or face immediate legal action. The 845-acre Black Swamp has been a focus of political and environmental controversy for years, with TWRA tangling with the state environment department repeatedly as it tried to get permits to flood it. The governor called for an independent review of TWRA's last permit request in 2003. It concluded that the project would undermine the trees and plants and not bring in many more ducks.

Source:

<http://www.tennessean.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080314/NEWS01/803140420/1006>

32. *March 13, Los Angeles Times* – (California) **California desert areas may lose federally protected status.** Congress is considering permanent protection for 26 million acres of beautiful and historic landscapes in the American West, but has quietly excluded millions of acres of California desert. In a system that would rival the national parks and forests, the National Landscape Conservation Act would unify the management and funding for areas such as the original Pony Express National Historic Trail, Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, a million acres of Alaskan caribou calving grounds, 38 wild rivers, Utah's Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, and a tiny ghost town near the Mexican border. But more than half of the 10.6 million-acre California Desert Conservation Area, which stretches from the Mexican border to Mono Lake, has been dropped on technical grounds. Because the word "national" is not in its title, the conservation area does not qualify, according to U.S. Bureau of Land Management attorneys. Environmental watchdogs and some land bureau employees say the California area, created by Congress in 1976, is the cornerstone of the fledgling national system. They say the semantics hide political motives: Utility companies have proposed hundreds of miles of electrical transmission corridors through California's deserts, and off-road vehicle enthusiasts oppose further regulation of the area.

Source: <http://travel.latimes.com/articles/la-trw-landscape14mar14>

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Dams Sector

33. *March 14, Appeal-Democrat* – (California) **FEMA: Yuba levees aren't strong enough.** Some Yuba County reclamation district officials were surprised to learn Thursday that the levees they maintain are not recognized as strong enough to protect residents in a 100-year flood. The majority of Yuba County's 50-plus miles of levees

were designated as not certified, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) officials said during a workshop where a tentative designation map was unveiled. Designations will ultimately determine what flood maps, expected to be released this fall, will look like. “I’m frustrated,” the District 10 chairman said. “They’re telling us all of our levees are (not certified), but they are not giving us any reasons why.” He said the district maintains its levees on a budget of \$19,000 and does not have the money to fund studies to see if the levees meet FEMA standards. He said the state Department of Water Resources does not see District 10 levees as having major deficiencies.

Source:

http://www.appeal-democrat.com/news/yuba_61533_article.html/levees_county.html

34. *March 14, Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* – (Alaska) **Borough looks to check strength of Tanana levee.** The Fairbanks North Star Borough is looking to re-certify the Tanana River Levee as strong enough to prevent flooding. Borough officials have said the re-certification is mandated by the federal government, which has looked to ensure the country’s levees are up to snuff following the 2005 failure of the New Orleans levee system. The Borough Assembly on Thursday set aside \$700,000 from the general fund to pay the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and a surveyor to assess the levee, which was built in the 1970s. The work needs to be complete by summer 2009, the public works director told assembly members, and actual repairs could require more money.

Source:

<http://newsminer.com/news/2008/mar/14/borough-looks-check-strength-tanana-levee/>

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